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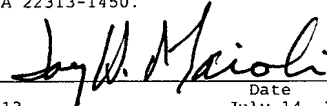


7217/61041

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicants: Youji KAWAMOTO et al.
Serial No.: 09/523,583
Filed: March 10, 2000
For: NETWORK SYSTEM, NETWORK SERVER AND TERMINAL
DEVICE
Group A.U.: 2155
Examiner: Liang-che Alex Wang

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Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

Jay H. Maioli Date
Reg. No. 27,213 July 14, 2004

July 14, 2004
1185 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10036
(212) 278-0400

RESPONSE

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

Applicant responds to the Office Action of April 16, 2004 as follows.

Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, and 17 remain in the application.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested of the rejection of claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, and 17 under 35 USC 103(a), as being

unpatentable over Lee et al. in view of Floden et al.

Features of the present invention, and presently recited in independent claims 1, 4, 7, 9, and 17, and the claims depending therefrom, are to form a group of a plurality of users that registered (past tense) in a predetermined group and to transmit information sent from a user belonging to the group to a terminal device used by another user belonging to the group.

These features of the present invention require a form of pre-registration of a plurality of users in a predetermined group so that the users are registered, and the formation of a group of the plurality of users that registered in the predetermined group. See Figs. 11 and 12 and page 28, line 21 to page 31, line 7 of the present application, for example.

It is respectfully submitted that Lee et al. fails to show or suggest at least the claimed "forming a group of a plurality of users that registered in a predetermined group". Lee et al. is merely teaching dividing a large database server (210 in Fig. 3) into a plurality of more manageable smaller databases (302-308 in Fig. 3). These smaller databases may be formed by grouping users in alphabetical order (e.g. A-F, G-S, T-Z) or beginning with specific numbers (e.g. 1-2, 3-6, 7-0). See col. 10, line 66 to col. 11, line 11 of Lee et al., for example.

The groups of Lee et al. are merely formed for the purpose of quick access to the stored data of all the users in a large database. Therefore, there is no showing or suggestion of


"forming a group of a plurality of users that registered in a predetermined group" in Lee et al. and, because there are no features in Floden et al. that somehow could be combined with Lee et al. and result in the presently claimed invention, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1, 4, 7, 9, and 17, and the claims depending therefrom, are patentably distinct over Lee et al. in view of Floden et al.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested of the rejection of claims 4, 6, and 9 under 35 USC 103(a), as being unpatentable over Lee et al. in view of Floden et al. and further in view of Boyle et al.

The rejection of amended independent claims 4 and 9 over Lee et al. in view of Floden et al. has been addressed above and, because there are no features in Boyle et al. that somehow could be combined with Lee et al. and Floden et al. and result in the presently claimed invention, it is respectfully submitted that amended independent claims 4 and 9, and the claims depending therefrom, are patentably distinct over Lee et al. in view of Floden et al. and further in view of Boyle et al.

Favorable reconsideration is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
COOPER & DUNHAM LLP


Jay H. Maioli
Reg. No. 27,213

JHM/PCF:tb



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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Youji Kawamoto et al.
Serial No.: 09/523,583
Filed: March 10, 2000
For: NETWORK SYSTEM , NETWORK SERVER AND TERMINAL DEVICE
Date: July 14, 2004

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

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Technology Center 2100

Sir:

Transmitted herewith is a Response in the above-identified application.

- ☒ No fee is required.
- ☐ The fee has been calculated as shown below.
- ☐ Total claims in excess of ☐ previously paid for, at \$18 (\$9)
- ☐ Independent claims in excess of ☐ previously paid for, at \$84 (\$42)
- ☐ Additional Fee for this Amendment
- ☐ This Response is being filed within the ☐ first month, ☐ second month, ☐ third month, ☐ fourth month, ☐ fifth month following the expiration of the term originally set therefor. Applicants Petition for an extension, and the fee of ☐ \$110 (\$55), ☐ \$410 (\$205), ☐ \$930 (\$465), ☐ \$1,450 (\$725), ☐ \$1,970 (\$985) is due and paid herewith.
- ☐ The fee of \$☐ set by 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(p) for the Information Disclosure Statement is due and paid herewith.
- ☐ A check in the amount of \$☐ is attached.
- ☒ Please charge any additional fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

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